

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**INTERAGENCY COORDINATION: PICKING-UP WHERE GOLDWATER-NICHOLS  
ENDED**

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## **ABSTRACT**

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The United States faces a strategic landscape characterized by uncertainty and asymmetrical threats that will challenge conventional thinking regarding interagency roles, missions, and coordination. The current interagency structure is framed by the National Security Act (NCA) of 1947, which mandated a major reorganization of the foreign policy and military establishments of the U.S. Government. Notwithstanding the original intent of the NCA, many in academia and government suggest subsequent legislations have unintentionally weakened the interagency process. This paper will answer the question, is there a need for a "Goldwater-Nichols-type" initiative to enhance integration of all the instruments of power of the United States? This analysis starts with an examination of the key factors which led to the National Security Act of 1947 in an effort to determine measurable causal factors. The author will then assess the current strategic environment against these foremost factors in order to answer the thesis question. The paper will show qualitative similarities in the challenges confronting the United States following World War II and today, and explain why the National Security Council is ill-equipped to deal with the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Finally, the paper will conclude with recommendations intended to enhance interagency coordination and experience.



## INTERAGENCY COORDINATION: PICKING-UP WHERE GOLDWATER-NICHOLS ENDED

The dramatic changes in the world since the end of the Cold War of the last half-century have not been accompanied by any major institutional changes in the executive branch of the U.S. Government. Serious deficiencies exist that only a significant organizational redesign can remedy.<sup>1</sup>

- U.S. Commission on National Security Report,  
January 2001

The 21<sup>st</sup> century strategic security environment will present challenges to the United States unlike those previously experienced. The horrific terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction technology, and the increasing divide between the beneficiaries of globalization all present serious challenges to the formulation of U.S. national strategy. Today's national security apparatus, charged with strategic planning and execution, is the result of the National Security Act of 1947. Notwithstanding efforts in the mid-80s that primarily focused on the national military establishment, the current national security apparatus is unchanged since its creation following World War II. In order to deal with the 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges, the United States, as the enduring world superpower, requires a national security apparatus that delivers a multi-dimensional approach to strategic planning and execution.

Since its creation in 1947, the National Security Council (NSC) has been at the core of the foreign policy coordination system.<sup>2</sup> However, when one compares the current challenges with interagency coordination and efficiency to the challenges with governmental effectiveness and efficiency facing the United States following World War II, one finds qualitative similarities. This suggests that in its present form, the U.S. Government, and specifically the NSC, may be ill-equipped to effectively deal with the 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges confronting the United States. It was Albert Einstein who stated, "Any intelligent fool can make things bigger, more complex, and more violent. It takes a touch of genius and a lot of courage to move in the opposite direction."<sup>3</sup> This author suggests a need for a Goldwater-Nichols-type legislation that focuses on interagency coordination and strategy development. Consequently, this paper puts forward a new national security apparatus for consideration. As well, in order to improve the quality of the civilian and military professionals working in the different agencies associated with the interagency process, this paper forwards a new approach to military and civilian personnel development that recognizes and rewards the value of interagency experience.

### Background: Impetus for Change – 1947 National Security Act

The strategic underpinnings of national security policy for the United States leading up to and following World War II were characterized by a fundamental mismatch between the international threat environment and the national security apparatus. While the problems facing the United States were varied, the most important challenges were shaped by a quickly changing strategic environment; rapid advances in technology; growing concern with organizational effectiveness and efficiency; a growing chorus of pundits and Congressional leaders advocating organizational changes to the foreign policy establishment; and efforts to unify the U.S. government and military services in an effort to improve organizational performance. These principal causal factors formed the foremost impetus for the National Security Act, and require examination in order to establish a frame of reference for future comparison.

*Strategic Landscape Following World War II:* The rejection of the League of Nations treaty in 1919 marked the dominance of isolationism in American foreign policy. Isolationism was not a viable policy and serious geopolitical factors, clearly manifested following World War II, reshaped the strategic environment for the United States. Reshaping started in 1937, during the Roosevelt Administration, with the Japanese invasion of China. China's encroachment into Japan forced the United States to dispose of its policy of "well ordered neutrality."<sup>4</sup> As well, the growing concern with Germany's European hegemonic aspirations supplanted U.S. beliefs in a new world order framed by peace and democracy, with the global spread of totalitarian governments and subjugation. For the United States, the strategic landscape was growing less stable and there were growing questions concerning its role in the changing world order. The realization of the changing strategic environment forced the United States to reevaluate its assumptions vis-à-vis national strategy and its long-standing policy of isolation.

*Rapid Technological Advances:* The escalating dilemma presented by Japan and Germany was exacerbated by the rapid growth in technology, especially in air power. Theorists and strategist understood air power had the potential to end the protection America enjoyed as a result of having the Atlantic and Pacific oceans as geographical buffers between Europe and the Pacific.<sup>5</sup> However, in Europe, the growing concerns over the great struggle between democracy and fascism were heightened by the emerging German Luftwaffe and Hitler's intent to use his superior air power to further his hegemonic ambitions.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, in the Pacific, the Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor in December of 1941, clearly demonstrated the strategic effect associated with the rapid growth in technology manifested in air power. The changing strategic

environment, coupled with the rapid advance in technology required increased organizational effectiveness and efficiency by the U.S. Government.

*Organizational Effectiveness Following World War II:* President Roosevelt managed to pull the United States out of the Great Depression and lead the country to victory in World War II. The Allied victory resulted in a fundamental shift in power from Western Europe to the United States and the Soviet Union. This led President Truman to reexamine the U.S. Government's ability to effectively deal with the post-war strategic challenges. Support of an active federal government shaped American politics throughout the remainder of the 20th century.<sup>7</sup> The emerging science of Public Administration provided a possible means to address the challenges associated with the modern world, and to improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency.<sup>8</sup> E. Pendleton Herring and proponents of Public Administration suggested the new science could leverage the benefits of emerging technologies and improve foreign policymaking. His writings had a profound effect on the dialogue concerning what a post-war policymaking apparatus should look like.<sup>9</sup> The growing desire for increased organizational effectiveness and efficiency would drive the decision to reorganize the U.S. Government in 1947.

*Defining the Challenges and the New Strategic Landscape:* A new wave of "think tanks" and experts arose after 1945, when the United States assumed the mantle of superpower and defender of the free world. Many such organizations received support from the U.S. government, which devoted massive resources to defense scientists and researchers. In an effort to help define the challenges facing the United States, several pioneering studies in the areas of systems analysis, game theory, and strategic bargaining informed the general discussion regarding U.S. foreign policymaking.<sup>10</sup> These "think tanks" influenced the discussion regarding the maturing ideas surrounding interagency coordination, and the relationship between the civilian and military departments and agencies. Douglas Stuart stated, "The Washington policy community recognized that after the war the government would need a new system for consultation between the...departments involved in foreign and security affairs."<sup>11</sup> Certainly these efforts influenced the discussion within the U.S. Government regarding the role of government agencies with regard to improving interagency coordination.

The U.S. experience in World War II, and the growing strategic threat of the Soviet Union ushered in an era of Congressional debate concerning U.S. foreign policymaking. Dr. Frank Trager wrote, "Each of the major wars fought in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries brought about at least temporary concern for the 'common defense.' The lessons of the war were presumably translated into enacted policy affecting the military departments and the armed forces. As we have seen, from time to time leadership capable of affecting change in policy

came from civilians, from the military itself, or from a fortuitous combination of both.”<sup>12</sup> Certainly the period following World War II was no exception to this rule. These issues converged in the summer of 1945, as Congress became more involved in the debate over the creation of post-war institutions.<sup>13</sup> This growing debate continued around the question of unity of effort across the entire national security apparatus.

*Efforts at Unification Following World War II:* The final causal factor for consideration concerns unity of effort across the U.S. Government, as well as, the desire to unify the individual military services into a single military establishment. The intent was to improve governmental efficiency and better deal with the complexities presented by the emerging strategic environment. It became obvious from our nation’s dismal lack of preparedness prior to World War II that some form of reorganization of the U.S. Government and the military was necessary in the post-war period. Also, the American public supported a new approach to foreign policymaking that maintained the status of the military while improving civilian-military relations.<sup>14</sup>

President Harry Truman was one of the most vocal advocates calling for integration of the elements of the defense in a single department under one authoritative responsible head.<sup>15</sup> The inference was that an integrated defense department, that coordinated and synchronized the elements of military power, was preferred to the stovepiped, service-oriented defense establishment of pre-World War II. Although the National Security Act of 1947 made considerable movement toward resolving many of the organizational issues confronting the U.S. military, it did not implement meaningful changes to the military personnel systems.

The 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act mandated that promotion to high rank required some period of duty with a joint command. This decision had the strong and immediate effects of loosening the loyalties of senior officers to their separate services and causing them to think more broadly about the military establishment as a whole.<sup>16</sup> Although establishing a joint duty career specialty went a long way in resolving the intellectual inadequacies of the National Security Act, complimentary work in the civilian sector has been insufficiently addressed since the Act was passed in 1947.

While the challenges confronting the United States leading up to and following World War II were numerous and wide-ranging, the most prominent ones were used in this paper to establish a framework for comparison. Therefore, in order to determine the level of congruency between strategic periods, it is useful to discuss the current challenges confronting the United States in the areas of strategic uncertainty; the rate of technological change; concern regarding organizational effectiveness and efficiency; the extent to which those in “think tanks”, academia



and Congress are advocating for organizational change; and the need for unity of effort across the national security apparatus.

#### 1947 To Today – Little Has Changed

William Navas suggests a marked parallel between the strategic landscape that led to the National Security Act of 1947 and the geopolitical situation today.<sup>17</sup> Similar to the Japanese attacks at Pearl Harbor, the 9/11 attacks on the United States forced the U.S. and the international community to face the realities of the changing strategic environment of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

*The Strategic Landscape Following the Cold War:* The strategic environment facing the United States following the end of the Cold War is far more complex and dangerous than ever before. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States has faced a strategic security environment characterized by a myriad of challenges – such as winning the global war on terrorism, slowing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and dealing with rogue states and elite regimes.<sup>18</sup> In a speech at the Woodrow Wilson Center, President George W. Bush stated, “We saw the future the terrorists intend for our nation on that fateful morning of September the 11th, 2001. That day we learned that vast oceans and friendly neighbors are no longer enough to protect us. September the 11th changed our country; it changed the policy of our government.”<sup>19</sup>

President William Clinton recognized the nature of the changing strategic environment, and the need for a multi-disciplined approach to national strategy development, even prior to 2001. He stated in Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) 56, “In the wake of the Cold War, attention has focused on a rising number of territorial disputes, armed ethnic conflicts, and civil wars.... We have learned that effective responses to these situations may require multi-dimensional operations....”<sup>20</sup> To confront the 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges, the United States requires a robust national security apparatus that harmonizes the totality of national effort to protect our interests abroad and at home.

*Rapid Growth of Technology In The 21st Century:* Former President Ronald Reagan’s letter to Congress framed the challenges facing the nation and defense department as a result of the rapid growth in technology. He stated, “Advancing technology, and the need to maintain a vital deterrent, continually tests our ability to introduce new weapons into our armed forces efficiently and economically.”<sup>21</sup> As well, the U.S. Commission on National Security in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century found that “science and technology will continue to advance and become more widely available and utilized around the world....”<sup>22</sup> The rapid growth in emerging technologies in

areas such as bio-engineering, nano-science, robotics, and artificial intelligence will present unique challenges and opportunities for the United States.<sup>23</sup> The enormous rate of advances in technology has forced a change in the prism through which the United States views national security and foreign policymaking.

In a speech to The Academy of Senior Professionals at Eckerd College, National Intelligence Council Chairman, John C. Gannon, concluded that technology was one of the key factors shaping the future strategic environment. The intersection of technology and the other key factors, demographics, natural resources and environment, globalization, national and international governance, future conflict, and the role of the United States, create an integrated picture of the world of 2015, which allows projections concerning some troubling trends of strategic importance to the United States.<sup>24</sup> Indeed the 9/11 Commission found that terrorists have benefited from the rapid growth in communication technology and that they easily acquire communication devices that are varied, global, instantaneous, complex, and encrypted. As well, the World Wide Web has provided our adversaries the means of acquiring information and exercising command and control over their operations.<sup>25</sup> The ability of radical ideologies to apply rapidly improving technologies will present significant challenges to the U.S. national interests.

*Government Effectiveness Following the Cold War:* Over the past 10-plus years the U.S. government has allocated considerable resources to improve government-wide organizational effectiveness and efficiency. Evidence of these improvement initiatives were found in the findings of the Government Accountability Office (GAO). The GAO found that the Federal government had implemented the tools of Total Quality Management (TQM), and the teachings of quality advocate W. Edwards Deming, in an effort to improve organizational efficiency. In an October 1992 report, the GAO concluded that a significant number of Federal organizations, about 68 percent, had implemented TQM in various phases.<sup>26</sup> In addition to the TQM initiatives, the Federal government conducted a National Performance Review (NPR) in 1993. Led by then Vice President Al Gore, the first phase of the NPR focused on how existing government programs could operate more efficiently and effectively. The second phase, which began in December 1994, focused primarily on what government should do.<sup>27</sup> In the end, the NPR made 384 recommendations designed to make the government "work better and cost less." These wide-ranging recommendations covered 27 federal agencies and 14 crosscutting government systems.<sup>28</sup>

Despite spending billions of dollars in new information systems and some limited advances in improving processes, the overall effectiveness of these efforts is debatable. The

9/11 Commission framed the current limitations and shortfalls in organizational effectiveness and efficiency: “We learned that the institutions charged with protecting our borders, civil aviation, and national security did not understand how grave this threat could be, and did not adjust their policies, plans, and practices to deter or defeat it. We learned of fault lines within our government—between foreign and domestic intelligence, and between and within agencies. We learned of the pervasive problems of managing and sharing information across a large and unwieldy government that had been built in a different era to confront different dangers.”<sup>29</sup> The findings of the 9/11 Commission, and subsequent efforts at governmental reform, helped to fuel the debate regarding the roles and missions of governmental agencies across the interagency community.

*Defining The 21st Century Security Challenges:* The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States, and subsequent government inquiries, ushered in a new round of debate regarding the capacity of the U.S. Government to respond to the threat presented by the changing strategic environment. As presently configured, the national security institutions of the U.S. Government are still the institutions constructed to win the Cold War. However, the United States confronts a very different world today.<sup>30</sup> The debate was further advanced when then Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Peter Pace, U.S. Marine Corps, asked whether we needed a Goldwater-Nichols-like act to integrate the interagency players.<sup>31</sup> Inside and outside the beltway, pundits, scholars, and strategist have attempted to answer this vexing question. The Center for Strategic and International Studies concluded that profound operational failures in Somalia and Iraq suggest a need for the U.S. Government to reexamine its approach to winning wars.<sup>32</sup> As well, Colonel Mark Needham, U.S. Army, concluded that it is time to enact legislation aimed at improving the effectiveness, cooperation, and coordination of all actors on the national security stage.<sup>33</sup> The debate surrounding the question of government efficiency serves to guide the general discussion regarding interagency coordination and unity of effort.

*Unity of Effort in the U.S. Government Following the Cold War:* The current state of affairs concerning unity of effort across the U.S. foreign policymaking structure is characterized by stovepiped organizations, poor interagency coordination, and missed opportunities. Martin Gorman and Alexander Krongard surmised that the United States has fundamentally mismatched its national security structure to the challenges of the current strategic environment. This mismatch between means and ways results in a piecemeal response to most international issues.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, the United States Commission on National Security/21st Century found that “The dramatic changes in the world since the end of the Cold War have not been accompanied

by any major institutional changes in the executive branch of the U.S. Government. Serious deficiencies exist that only a significant organizational redesign can remedy. Most troublesome is the lack of an overarching strategic framework guiding U.S. national security policymaking and resource allocation. Clear goals and priorities are rarely set. Budgets are prepared and funds are appropriated as they were during the Cold War.”<sup>35</sup>

The lack of unity of effort in the executive branch is further exacerbated by a serious lack of interagency experience in personnel responsible for developing foreign policy and national strategy. Given the considerable policymaking task, the national security component requires civil service and military professionals with broad experience in the interagency process, and with depth and knowledge about policy issues.<sup>36</sup> Although the military has codified requirements for interagency coordination in Joint doctrine, truthfully, there is no single entity responsible for managing coordination and providing strategic leadership and direction across the interagency community.<sup>37</sup>

Furthermore, the personnel systems needed to build a cadre of civilian and military interagency professionals are lacking in the U.S. Government. Michael Thompson writes that “despite ad hoc organizational reforms in recent years, nothing in Operations Enduring Freedom or Iraqi Freedom would suggest that DoD’s Combatant Commands are equipped, organizationally or culturally, to handle these interagency challenges.”<sup>38</sup> Certainly, the interagency process, especially when military planners are involved throughout, can represent a significant force multiplier, but it suffers from deficiencies in methods, actors, and structure.<sup>39</sup> The State Department has also recognized the need to establish and maintain an interagency-savvy civilian force and the capability to deploy personnel in response to national security requirements.<sup>40</sup> However, as previously stated, the lack of trained and experienced interagency professionals significantly affects the quality of the interagency process, and results in a disjointed approach to national strategy formulation.

As William Navas suggested, there is a marked parallel between the strategic landscape following the end of World War II and the strategic backdrop following the end of the Cold War. The 21<sup>st</sup> century will present new challenges to the United States and will test the capacity of the national security apparatus to develop the multi-dimensional approach to problem solving President Clinton suggested.

#### Why the Current National Security Council (NSC) Won't Work

The United States promulgates national security policy through a complex, recursive negotiation process across multiple interagency players. Since its creation in 1947, the NSC

has been at the center of this national security coordination process. The NSC was formed to advise the President with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to national security, so as to enable the departments and agencies to cooperate more effectively.<sup>41</sup> Although the President may direct the NSC to perform functions for the purpose of more effectively coordinating the policies and functions of the departments and agencies,<sup>42</sup> the NSC was never intended to have the broad authoritative powers, nor organized with the necessary infrastructure, to deal with the complex challenges facing the nation today.

*Changing Role of the NSC Based on Chief Executive's Inclinations:* The role of the NSC has changed many times to match the needs and inclinations of each succeeding chief executive.<sup>43</sup> Under President Truman, the NSC was dominated by the Department of State and primarily monitored policy implementation. President Kennedy preferred a less structured approach to policymaking and coordination; therefore, he dismantled the NSC in favor of his Special Assistant for National Security Affairs. This off-the-cuff approach to policymaking continued during the Johnson administration, and in many respects, Johnson further diluted the role of the NSC. Presidents Nixon and Ford expanded the NSC staff and charged the Council with the task of gathering information from the different departments. Under the Nixon and Ford systems, the National Security Adviser took center stage as the principal counselor on policy options. Over the next few years and administrations, the NSC would take a collegial approach to coordination, and would continue to be reshaped based on the desires of the chief executive.<sup>44</sup>

The Beyond Goldwater-Nichols Team concluded that the organization and functions of the NSC have not been adequately addressed since its creation in 1947. Indeed, the Team determined the NSC needed to play a greater role in coordinating policy planning and overseeing policy execution with regard to regional crises.<sup>45</sup> However, the greater role envisioned by the Team is difficult to subscribe to an organization that has had its scope of responsibilities fluctuate according to the desires of each new chief executive. Moreover, this on-going process of metamorphosis limits the NSC's ability to develop long-term strategic policy.

*The Structure of the NSC Makes Long-Term Strategic Planning Difficult:* The NSC is chaired by the President with only the Vice President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Treasury, and the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (National Security Adviser) as permanent members. The real work with respect to formulating the Council's meeting agenda and policy coordination is accomplished by a small infrastructure comprised of an administrative staff and working groups. The administrative staff

performs a variety of activities in advising and assisting the President and the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs.<sup>46</sup> Additionally, a system of permanent and ad hoc interagency working groups is normally established at the start of each new administration to facilitate policy coordination. Given the challenges facing the nation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the small structure of the NSC staff limits its ability to plan and execute long-term strategic policy. Likely because of this inability, the Brookings Institution found that the NSC is immersed in policy detail and focuses predominantly on the short-term. Furthermore, an NSC encumbered by analyzing second-order foreign policy business will not be able to fulfill its primary function of advising the President.<sup>47</sup>

*Ineffective Organizational Learning and Missed Opportunities:* As stated, the structure and functioning of the NSC depends in no small degree upon the interpersonal chemistry between the President and his principal advisers and department heads.<sup>48</sup> However, the changeover in intellectual thought and experience that occurs with changes in administrations, results in missed opportunities and a relearning of lessons across the organization. The Clinton Administration learned this lesson following the challenges associated with humanitarian operations in places like Somalia. As a result, in May 1997, President Clinton promulgated PDD-56 to outline interagency planning for complex contingency operations.<sup>49</sup> The PDD was an order for the Pentagon, State Department, Central Intelligence Agency, and other government agencies and departments to create a cohesive program for educating and training personnel for peacekeeping missions. However, the procedures outlined in PDD-56, and the lessons learned, were overlooked when the Bush Administration took control of the Executive branch in 2001.

The subsequent loss of intellectual thought and lessons learned potentially affected interagency planning and coordination for operations in Iraq. This was a harsh lesson for the Bush Administration to relearn as the United States dealt with the challenges of stabilization and reconstruction efforts in Iraq. Therefore, in December 2005, the Bush Administration issued National Security Presidential Directive 44 to better manage interagency efforts during reconstruction and stabilization operations. It is difficult to quantify the effects of the loss of intellectual capital and experience on interagency planning and coordination. However, current challenges in developing and implementing national policy across the interagency community certainly demonstrate a negative qualitative effect.

*Ineffective Control of Interagency Rivalries:* President John Adams stated, "The essence of a free government consists in an effectual control of rivalries."<sup>50</sup> If President Adam's observation is correct, then the organization tasked with leading the interagency process must

be an arbitrator of disputes, coordinator of action, and a central body responsible for harmonizing the national elements of power. However, as stated, the NSC lacks the authoritative powers necessary to direct actions. The Beyond Goldwater-Nichols Team suggested that in an effort to reinforce the National Security Adviser's coordinative focus on policy development, the President should instruct him or her to establish an NSC Strategic Planning Office. The National Security Adviser's staff should have a strategic planning unit whose function would be to provide the President and the NSC with strategic analysis, long-range planning, and policy alternatives.<sup>51</sup> The problems associated with the NSC's inability to effectively control interagency rivalries are exacerbated by its inability to influence interagency funding appropriations and spending priorities.

*Inability to Influence Appropriations and Spending Priorities:* A potentially effective means to control opposing government agencies is the ability to influence congressional appropriations and spending priorities. However, this control instrument is noticeably absent from the NSC's proverbial "tool kit" when dealing with the interagency actors. At present, each Department submits its independent budget request directly to the President and Congress with little regard for interagency requirements. The Department of State's Performance and Accountability Report brings together detailed information on the Department's audited financial statements and performance results achieved. The Report is submitted to the President, Congress, and members of the public to inform on how well the Department performed in managing its programs and finances.<sup>52</sup> Every four years, the Department of Defense conducts a review of its forces, resources, and programs, and presents the findings of this Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) to the President and Congress. The QDR provides a basic strategy for addressing critical issues like budget and acquisition priorities, emerging threats, and defense capabilities for the next 20 years.<sup>53</sup> There is however, no tool available to assess financial allocations to achieve overall national goals for integrated interagency efforts.

Ian J. Brzezinski and Frank C. Carlucci recommended that the director of the Office of Management and Budget, the director of the National Economic Council, and the National Security Adviser be responsible for developing an integrated budget report and presenting it to the President and the NSC.<sup>54</sup> Nevertheless, the NSC remains unable to influence congressional appropriations and spending across the interagency community, making the control President Adams envisioned difficult to achieve. In fact, the United States Institute of Peace correctly concluded that "Bedeviling interagency cooperation is the perplexing budgetary challenge of how to get resources when department heads – and not NSC officials – are responsible for funding programs."<sup>55</sup>

The makeup of the NSC, its lack of authoritative powers, its inability to control the resources of the interagency departments, and its on-going process of metamorphosis following each change in administration makes the NSC ill-equipped to deal with the challenges confronting the United States in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### Recommendations

Accepting the Democratic presidential nomination in July 1960, President John F. Kennedy stated, "The new frontier of which I speak is not a set of promises—it is a set of challenges."<sup>56</sup> One might have thought President Kennedy was speaking following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States. The strategic frontier facing the United States in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will present new challenges and will require innovative thinking regarding foreign policymaking and interagency coordination. Colonel Needham correctly articulated the vexing question confronting the United States, "...who is going to lead the process and will that interagency leader have the requisite authority to formulate strategy, calculate policy, and execute actions to achieve our objectives?"<sup>57</sup> The U.S. Government must restructure the national security apparatus and emphasize the importance of interagency coordination, not just at the senior-most levels, but at the mid-level and junior-levels of the national security structure as well.

*Create A Department Of National Security And Strategy:* Gorman and Krongard suggest creating a national-level joint interagency organization that brings together the relevant policy, military, intelligence, and other parts of the Government. This new organization would have the interagency personnel and the leadership needed to integrate comprehensive policy options.<sup>58</sup> This recommendation represents a good starting point, but does not go far enough with respect to providing the power to influence appropriations and control spending priorities. The authors attempted to rectify this potential intellectual shortcoming by recommending that the primacy of the current departments and agencies involved in national security be lowered.<sup>59</sup> However, Gorman and Krongard failed to take their recommendation to the next logical, and admittedly politically sensitive, level.

The U.S. Government would be more responsive and effective in meeting the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century by creating a new Department of National Security and Strategy (DNSS). Gabriel Marcella correctly stated that the interagency is not a place, but a process involving human beings and organizations with different cultures, strategic outlooks, and interests.<sup>60</sup> Therefore, the organization tasked with coordinating national security strategy must have the statutory responsibility to direct the activities of the different interagency actors. Under this new



framework the Secretary of DNSS would have statutory responsibility over the major interagency actors, to include but not limited to, the Departments of State and Defense. This would resolve the current inability of the NSC to control and direct activities across the interagency community to ensure unity of effort across the competing departments. As well, by establishing a cabinet-level department with its associated infrastructure, the United States lessens the loss of intellectual thought and lessons learned that accompany each change in administration.

*Establish Interagency Training And Education:* The Secretary of DNSS should establish a professional interagency education system similar to the professional military education system in the Department of Defense. Clark Murdock and Richard Weitz offer an excellent recommendation in this regard. They recommend creating a new Training Center for Interagency and Coalition Operations that would be run jointly by the DoD's National Defense University and the State Department's National Foreign Affairs Training Center.<sup>61</sup> Moreover, the Secretary of DNSS should establish an Interagency Staff College similar to DoD's Joint Forces Staff College. The Interagency Staff College would educate civilian and military professionals to plan and lead at the critical operational level. Moreover, the Secretary of DNSS should ensure that interagency college graduates actually serve in interagency duty assignments.

*Create Interagency Service Officers:* Additional lessons can be drawn from the Goldwater-Nichols experience. The requirement for increased joint assignments provided military officers improved understandings of the capabilities, doctrine, and tactics of sister Services. The Act went further to establish in each Service a joint duty career specialty to provide an opportunity to develop a small cadre of military officers who had demonstrated abilities for, and an interest in, joint duty.<sup>62</sup> The Secretary of DNSS should also establish an interagency duty career specialty to provide an opportunity to develop a cadre of civilian and military professionals who are trained to work the interagency process. These new Interagency Service Officers (ISO) would be required to return to their parent organizations periodically to ensure they do not become isolated, and thereby maintain a certain degree of organizational specific proficiency. This proposal, coupled with the new education and training initiative recommended above, will provide a process to develop a professional interagency cadre and inculcate the value of interagency experience throughout the Department

*Reward Interagency Experience:* Finally, the quality of the advice produced by the interagency process is directly related to the quality of the civilian and military professionals working in the different agencies. It is critical that the United States has trained civilian and military professionals experienced with the interagency process. Similar to the actions taken by

Goldwater-Nichols to reward joint duty, the Secretary of DNSS should revise the current civilian and military personnel systems to reward interagency experience. Given the relatively limited joint experience that Service Chiefs brought to their Joint Chief of Staff duties, it was desirable for them to get set some joint duty qualification for promotion to such an important position.<sup>63</sup> Therefore, Goldwater-Nichols required joint experience as a prerequisite for promotion to flag or general officer. In the same way, the Secretary of DNSS should change the civilian personnel system requirements to serve in designated positions, and require interagency experience as a prerequisite for promotion to Senior Executive Service. Moreover, the military personnel systems should change to require both interagency and joint experience as prerequisites for promotion to flag or general officer. These changes will demonstrate the importance of interagency experience, and serve to inculcate interagency experience across the new Department.

### Conclusion

The challenges confronting the United States following the end of the World War II are qualitatively similar to the challenges the U.S. Government will face in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The 21<sup>st</sup> century strategic environment is characterized by uncertainty and ambiguity, which makes the development of long-term strategic solutions difficult. Furthermore, these challenges are aggravated by rapid advances in technology; questionable organizational effectiveness and efficiency across the interagency community; an inability despite considerable debate, to clearly define the characteristics of the emerging strategic environment; and the absence of real unity of effort across the interagency community.

As discussed above, the architects of the National Security Act of 1947 clearly understood the challenges confronting the United States, and therefore created the NSC as a tool for the executive branch to deal with the changing strategic environment. However, today the NSC is plagued by a constant changeover in key personnel following each change in administration that results in having to relearn critical lessons. This coupled with the inability to influence congressional appropriations and spending, and the lack of a trained cadre of interagency professionals, significantly affects interagency performance and further accentuates the difficulties in interagency coordination.

Despite the considerable degree of change in the geopolitical environment since the end of World War II, the United States has not had a significant reform of the entire national security apparatus since 1947. Therefore, this paper has proposed the U.S. Government must conduct a reorganization of the national security apparatus similar in scope to the Goldwater-Nichols

effort of 1986. Moreover, in order to effectively deal with the challenges facing the nation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the United States needs a new cabinet-level organization with statutory responsibilities for programming and budgeting, and for training a cadre of interagency professionals.

#### Endnotes

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<sup>2</sup> The White House, "*History of The National Security Council, 1947-1997*," available from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/history.html>; Internet; accessed 8 September 2005.

<sup>3</sup> Kevin Harris, Selected quotes by Albert Einstein, available from <http://rescomp.stanford.edu/~cheshire/EinsteinQuotes.html>; Internet; accessed 5 December 2005.

<sup>4</sup> Douglas T. Stuart, *Present At The Legislation: The 1947 National Security Act* (U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, November 2000), 6.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>6</sup> Geoffrey Perret, *Winged Victory – The Army Air Forces in World War II* (New York: Random House. 1993), 33. Hitler was counting on the Luftwaffe's growing might to frighten his foes into submission. The shadow of Luftwaffe bomber darkened every sidewalk in the cities of Europe, yet no free nation's air force threatened Berlin. German air power was Hitler's ace and only planes could counter plans.

<sup>7</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt managed to pull Americans out of the Great Depression and lead them to victory in World War II, two pretty tall orders. His support of an active federal government shaped American politics through the remainder of the 20th century. His package of federally-supported public works and social programs was known collectively as the New Deal. Roosevelt was so popular he was elected four times -- a lengthy run which led to the passage of the 22nd Amendment, restricting presidents to two terms. He died in office only a few months into his fourth term. Available from <http://www.answers.com/topic/franklin-d-roosevelt>; Internet: accessed on 8 December 2005.

<sup>8</sup> Stuart, 8.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>10</sup> Richard N. Haass, "*Think Tanks and U.S. Foreign Policy: A Policy-Maker's Perspective*," available from <http://www.state.gov/s/p/rem/15506.htm>; Internet; accessed on 8 December 2005.

<sup>11</sup> Stuart, 13.

<sup>12</sup> Frank N. Trager, "The National Security Act of 1947: Its Thirtieth Anniversary," Air University Review, November – December 1977 [journal on-line], available from <http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/aureview/1977/nov-dec/trager.html#trager>; Internet; accessed on 8 December 2005.

<sup>13</sup> Stuart, 14.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>16</sup> National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon The United States, "The 9/11 Commission Report," 86, available from <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/911/>; Internet; accessed on 15 December 2005.

<sup>17</sup> William A. Navas, Jr. "The National Security Act of 2002. Organizing For National Security," (Strategic Studies Institute. U.S. Army War College. November 2000), 231.

<sup>18</sup> Michele A. Flournoy et al., *Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: U.S. Government and Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era Phase 2 Report* (Center of Strategic and International Studies, July 2005), 26.

<sup>19</sup> George W. Bush, *President Discusses Iraqi Election, Victory in The War on Terror*, available from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/12/20051214-1.html>; Internet; accessed on 15 December 2005.

<sup>20</sup> George W. Bush, *PDD/NSC 56 Managing Complex Contingency Operations* (Washington, D.C.: The White House, May 1997), available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/pdd56.htm>; Internet; accessed on 31 October 2005.

<sup>21</sup> Ronald Reagan, *Message From The President of The United States transmitting His Views of The Future Structure and Organization of Our Defense Establishment and The Legislative Steps That Should Be Taken To Implement Defense Reforms*, Washington, D.C. 1986.

<sup>22</sup> Gary Hart et al., *New World Coming: American Security in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Major Themes and Implications*, available from <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/nssg/nwc.pdf>; Internet; accessed on 13 December 2005, 6.

<sup>23</sup> Kip P. Nygren, "Emerging Technologies and Exponential Change: Implications for Army Transformation," *Parameters* (Summer 2002), available from U.S. Army War College, Selected Readings Academic Year 2006, Strategic Leadership Course.

<sup>24</sup> John C. Gannon, "National Security in the Next Generation. *National Intelligence Council*," n.d., available from [http://www.cia.gov/nic/speeches\\_nextgen.html](http://www.cia.gov/nic/speeches_nextgen.html); Internet; accessed on 15 December 2005.

<sup>25</sup> National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon The United States, "The 9/11 Commission Report," 88, available from <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/911/>; Internet; accessed on 15 December 2005.

<sup>26</sup> U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Quality Management: Survey of Federal Organizations*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1992), 2.

<sup>27</sup> U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Government Reform: GAO's Comments on the National Performance Review*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1992), 1.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon The United States, "*The 9/11 Commission Report*," xvi, available from <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/911/>; Internet; accessed on 15 December 2005.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 399.

<sup>31</sup> Martin J. Gorman and Alexander Krongard, "*A Goldwater-Nichols Act for the U.S. Government: Institutionalizing the Interagency Process*," Joint Force Quarterly (October 2005): 51.

<sup>32</sup> Flournoy, 43.

<sup>33</sup> Mark Needham, *The Triad of National Security: Legislation For The 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Strategic Research Project (Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, March 2005), 1.

<sup>34</sup> Gorman and Krongard, 53.

<sup>35</sup> The United States Commission on National Security/21<sup>st</sup> Century, *Roadmap For National Security: Imperatives for Change: The Phase Three Report*, February 2001, available from <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/nssg/>; Internet; accessed 15 December 2005, X.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., xvi.

<sup>37</sup> Michael J. Thompson, "*Breaking the Proconsulate: A New Design for National Power*," Parameters (Winter 2005-06), available from <http://carlisle-www.army.mil/usawc/Parameters/05winter/thompson.htm>; Internet; accessed on 19 December 2005.

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<sup>39</sup> George T Raach and Ilana Kass, "*National Power and The Interagency Process*," Joint Force Quarterly (Summer 1995): 8.

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

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<sup>58</sup> Gorman and Krongard, 54.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>60</sup> Dr Gabriel Marcella. The quote is found in a draft chapter titled, “*National Security and The Interagency Process*,” 9. Dr. Marcella is a faculty member at the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 227.

<sup>63</sup> National Defense University, National Defense University Library, *Goldwater Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986*, 223, available from <http://www.ndu.edu/library/goldnich/goldnich.html>; Internet; accessed on 4 January 2006.